

THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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UNCLE BOB'S NIECE.

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CHAPTER XXXIV.

A MALICIOUS person, incapable or careless of understanding her, might have said that she took him in her train to enhance her own charms. But they needed no background; and yet they had not before had so good a foil.

As he was whirled suddenly into a society which, to his unaccustomed eyes, was brilliant and dazzling, his native awkwardness seemed to shoot out into sudden growth, and to take new life. It was in part vanity—for that amazingly subtle quality is more frequently of the masculine gender than male moralists lead us to suppose; and it is found in the clodhopper as well as the dandy; in part, pride; in part, a hurt and amazed sense that riches here went for less than the graces of life. A meeker man might have tried to hide his solecisms, and only groaned over them in private; but Uncle Bob seemed to thrust his mistakes into your face, and to suffer for them under the public gaze.

An Englishman has some need of dignity not to look ridiculous in the full dress which is the outcome of a Paritanic reaction from the artistic splendour of an earlier age. Whether Uncle Bob's ungainliness would have been better concealed by the velvet and fur of a more sumptuous day, may be a question; it showed out with cruel prominence under the orthodox attire, as if he and his coat had quarrelled, and the latter refused to recognise their partnership.

While he had Tilly by his side, he had

a sense of protection; but she was presently borne from him, and then his tribulation began. The talk that buzzed all round was too quick for him; he followed it lumberingly. Mrs. Popham's conventional phrases of welcome—not so warm as they once would have been—embarrassed him; and he embarked on a laboured explanation of his presence which led him into new difficulties. When she took him across the room to introduce him to a lady, he stumbled over more than one sweeping train; and he failed to know what to do with the introduction when it was made. He put out a big hand, but the lady waved her fan ignorantly; and he drew it back, suffering a hot shame.

She was a woman of the world, and something of a beauty and a wit; a person of large consideration in Mrs. Popham's little circle; and when, with a sort of careless imperiousness, she asked: "Who is that very odd person near the door? Do bring him over here; he looks as if he would be amusing," Mrs. Popham could do nothing but obey; but she paused to say half-apologetically:

"He is very rich."

The devouring interest she had once felt in Tilly's uncle had died in its natural course; but she had a remnant of heart tucked away somewhere under her spare bodice, and it spoke for him.

"Ah," said Lady Stanmore lightly, "it's that, is it? I knew there would be something; but I fancied it might be science."

"You know young Mr. Temple?" her hostess lingered on in explanation, "that is his future uncle-in-law."

Lady Stanmore's face showed a faint amusement; but she said suavely:

"I have heard of him. You must certainly bring him to me. And that

young lady is the prospective bride?" She turned a pair of fine eyes, and looked at Tilly, who stood near.

"She is very pretty, don't you think?" faltered Mrs. Popham, obeying a tardy sting of conscience.

"Very," said the other, in a high tone of careless assent, "and she illustrates the uncle's wealth most successfully."

It was to this guest that Mr. Burton was presently led, to minister to her entertainment. She did not probably mean of set purpose to be unkind; but in the world in which she lived the need to strangle importunate aches and to stifle the first note of dulness, made her of necessity cruel. She was inwardly wishing she had not yielded to Mrs. Popham's urgent invitation; it promised to be a stupid evening even with the adoration of young Mr. Temple to vary it; and she proceeded to extract what amusement she could out of Mr. Burton's social inexperience.

Fred had arrived early; and from a hidden corner he watched the scene with mingled shame, rage, and disgust, which quivered through his small soul. For the first time he suffered an anger against Tilly which was deeper and more compelling than his love for her. He had hinted with unconcealed complacency to Lady Stanmore of his conquest, confident that Tilly's charms would win approval even from an acknowledged queen of society; and now it seemed as if she had desired to mortify him, to shame his satisfaction, and to cast ridicule on his pretensions.

Hitherto he had held her taste in dress to be faultless, and she had never shown any desire to wear the ornaments he knew her to have in abundance; to-night, but for her young and smiling innocence, he would have called her vulgar. It seemed to his angry senses as if she had purposely bedizened herself with a gorgeousness which was quite out of keeping with her circumstances and with the occasion, and which must inevitably condemn her in the judgement of any person of refinement.

Fred felt it was hard; but when he looked across the room and saw her uncle standing in uneasy and clownish misery—a mark for Lady Stanmore's light shafts—his sense of injury grew almost insupportable. He could not hear a word that was said; but he saw smiles on the faces near her, and he knew her well enough to picture quite unerringly the light scorn with which she would set her talk above

his dull comprehension, that she might take a faint additional pleasure out of his mystification.

No thought of pity for the victim visited Fred; when he saw him extract with difficulty a large and gay bandana Tilly had omitted to forfeit, and proceed to polish his fevered head, Fred's pity was almost all for himself. To have boasted of his success, and to have its humiliating conditions thus laid bare before the eyes that, of all others, he would have blinded, this was bitter indeed. He had come with some unhealed soreness in his heart because of what he felt to be Tilly's neglect of his claims: he had called fruitlessly that afternoon at Yarrow House; and he had not seen her since her abrupt departure on the night of the Claverings' dance. He had meant to remonstrate with her, to urge his desires once more; but all these intentions were swept away before the force of his anger and wounded self-esteem.

He had so cultivated his sense of injury that when he at last reluctantly crossed the room to join her, he felt that her repentance must needs be very lively to soothe it; he was even capable of wishing that he might ignore her; but his whisper here and hint there had spread the fact of his engagement, and he could no longer pass as a mere acquaintance.

Tilly, unconscious of any reason why she should feel guilty, wondered if he were ill when she noticed the extreme pallor.

"Have you a headache?" she asked. "The room is very hot, and the scent of those banks of flowers is rather overpowering."

"I am quite well," he answered coldly. "Won't you come to some quieter place? We are standing as if we had grouped ourselves for effect."

His words had a bitter flavour. At another time he would have been willing enough to make one in a tableau with her for admiring eyes to see; but a group in which Uncle Bob took part could only stir smiles.

"So that's the gilded pill Temple has to swallow," he could hear his acquaintances whispering; "that old boy for an uncle-in-law. They say he means to stand by the young folks. Temple won't find it so easy to soar into the upper air he loves with this dead weight tied to him. Money isn't everything nowadays."

"As for blood," said another, "there's none on his side either. Son of a dispensing country apothecary."

"What! Has the fellow a father? He was always awfully vague about his people; left you to imagine them dukes if you pleased."

"If they had been dukes he wouldn't have been vague," sneered the first.

Perhaps he only imagined it all; but it is quite true that he had given himself airs, and doubtless he was now to suffer for them. He was suffering, indeed, as he stood with Tilly under the blaze of unsoftened light which Mrs. Popham loved.

"Won't you come to a quieter place?" he said.

"Do you know," she answered, resolved to keep a hold on her happiness while she could, "it sounds very like 'Won't you come and be scolded'? What is it, Fred? Is it something about me that doesn't please you?"

His glance involuntarily wandered down her draperies, and she was quick to interpret its meaning.

"You don't like my dress?"

"Well, since you ask me, I confess it seems to me rather—conspicuous."

She seemed to study its gay folds a moment.

"And the diamonds?" she questioned, looking up.

"I see no other unmarried lady wearing such jewels, certainly."

She smiled rather gravely.

"Those are two very good reasons for your argument," she said; "but I had a better reason than either of them. This dress was chosen by my uncle, and sent home as a surprise. The diamonds were his gift too. If the gown had been ten times uglier than it is—and it is really only a little too bright—I should have been proud to wear it, because of the loving thought he gave to the choice of it."

She looked at him as if she expected him to sympathise, but his face expressed a cold neutrality.

"You might think a little of pleasing me," he said.

"So I will," she answered. "I shall have a great deal of time for that. But, Fred, I want you to be a little happy with me now. I have had such a happy day, and, to crown and complete it, I persuaded my uncle to come here with me to-night. Have you seen him?"

"I have seen him."

For a moment he found it impossible to add anything to this curt phrase. Her loyalty to and love for this offensive boor was a continual wonder to him. It hinted

at a lack of perception which might even endanger their married happiness. What was the good of being rich if they were not to shake off the old traditions, and begin anew upon a higher plane? But he could not say to her, "You had no right to shame us both by bringing your uncle here;" and when he spoke, it was to say, "I don't think you studied his happiness when you persuaded him to come."

She turned her head swiftly to the spot where he stood. A little group had gathered round him and Lady Stanmore, attracted by her subtle wit. To Tilly's guilelessness it all looked very gay and animated.

"Who is that with whom he is talking?"

"Lady Stanmore," said Fred, with an accent that was lost upon her.

"He will like that," she said, with restored confidence. "He has a great respect and reverence for real ladies. He will like talking to her."

"It is she who is talking to him, I believe."

"He will like that better still," she laughed. "If he should seem dull or lonely by-and-by, you will go to him? He said, as we were coming here, that it was a pleasure to him to think that he should see you in the society you are used to. I don't know quite what he expects, but he seems to think you a very conquering sort of young man."

He was not to be moved by her gentle gaiety. The wound to his self-love was too deep. He felt that the mastery he meant to establish after marriage might become impossible. If she persisted in clinging to her uncle, how could he hope to shake her resolution?

The advantages of the position were all on her side. The money was hers. If she chose to set her life to the vulgar traditions of her youth, what power had he to prevent it? It was as gall and bitterness to his spirit to remember his helplessness; to feel his bondage to the man he was fast learning to hate.

"When we are married," he said, "you will not need to seek any companionship but mine, I hope. You will find me very devoted. We shall be a model pair, and be seen everywhere together."

"But the new ties need not exclude the old"—she spoke with a little reproach—"Uncle Bob shall go with us when he feels inclined, and, when he doesn't we shall carry all our triumphs home to amuse him."

"I shouldn't fancy they would interest him much," he said, forced to put some outward restraint upon himself, but inwardly angry that she should not understand.

"Oh, you don't know; you don't know how proud he means to be of us both. He is giving us everything that he may enjoy it through us. He is very unselfish. A great many men would have wanted to spend all that money on their own pleasures; but he is thinking only of us. If we are happy, that will make him happy too."

She spoke rather wistfully. She had made up her mind to marry him, and she would not listen to any vague disquietude as to what their life with each other might turn out. She was capable of giving him a loyalty equal to that she yielded her uncle, if he were capable of deserving it.

They danced once or twice, but less frequently than usual. Fred, when not dancing with her, was always careful to keep the breadth of the room between him and Mr. Burton. He would give no sanction to his presence there by talking to him or noticing him, and Mr. Burton's mutely astonished glances that seemed shot at him across space only stiffened his purpose.

Uncle Bob was having a very bad quarter-of-an-hour indeed, though possibly some people might have envied him the notice Lady Stanmore was bestowing on him. He could have talked with interest on any subject within the range of his experiences, but her words and her allusions were a dead language to him; and the perfection of her manner, which, in half-careless scorn, she polished for his benefit, left him as hot and cold as if under an aguish attack. She saw that she made him wretched, and presently, as his wretchedness ceased to amuse her, she turned away and walked across the room, leaving him unable to make up his mind whether it was more terrible to be talked to or be consigned to conspicuous neglect. He got on the path of the dancers, and was buffeted by them or skirted angrily by them, and in either case was wholly unhappy.

By-and-by, however, a pair of watchful eyes saw him.

"I must go to my uncle," said Tilly, withdrawing herself from the side of a young man who had encircled her waist for a waltz, and leaving him mutinous.

"But it's our dance!" he said in a voice of remonstrance.

"Oh, well," said the girl, who had waltzed in the last months rather oftener than Fred had liked with this particular young man, "it is our dance; but couldn't you just imagine for once that we've had it?"

"No imagination would make up for the loss. Don't you think your uncle could wait?"

"He might, but I couldn't. But if you'll excuse me this time I'll pay my debt by-and-by."

"Very well," he said; "I'll demand principal and interest, and on that condition I submit."

He took her himself to the spot where Uncle Bob stood, privately wondering what she meant, and wondering not the less when he noticed the start of joy with which she was received.

"Here I am," she said. "Did you think you had lost me? Are you enjoying yourself, dear?"

"Well"—he set his teeth with a grim sort of determination—"I can thole it a while longer if you're not tired of it yet."

"Is it so bad as that?" She passed her hand within his arm. They were standing near the mantelpiece, and she leaned forward to look at the clock. "We've just been here an hour."

"An hour!" he echoed. "It's like a month to me."

"Oh," she said, "I'm quite ready to be tired of it all, and we'll go home very soon if you like. Has Fred been with you?"

"No," he began almost violently, "he's never looked the road I'm on—" but he checked himself suddenly. "It's not his blame, and we'll not cast out," he went on as if he were trying how gentle he could be. "He's got other things to think of, and what should he come and talk to me for when there's you, forby all the other leddies?"

"Oh," she said, in a low voice, "don't make excuses for him on my account. There's a right and a wrong. Do you think, however much I cared for him, I couldn't see that? If he neglects you, you who—"

"Hoots! havers!" he cried. "Who's talking of neglect? If there's a wrong in the matter, it was in my coming here—an auld fool that should have known better. I'm just fair donner'd wi' the noise and the heat. I'll slip into a quiet corner; and just you go and enjoy yourself, and never mind me. I'll get on fine."

For all answer she drew him out of the

room, and led him to a small greenhouse built out to the back of the house, and opening from an ante-room. Here Mrs. Popham cultivated her love of bright colour and strong perfume. The night odours, indeed, of the luscious spring flowers were too powerful for any but those whose desire for a quiet refuge was urgent; and the greenhouse, and, for the moment, the ante-room too, was unoccupied. She led him to a seat behind a well-grown group of palms, and he went unresistingly. The gentle, yielding mood was on him still; and though the evening had been cruel to him, what she willed he was ready to do.

She put her head down on his shoulder.

"We'll go home very soon," she said, as if she were soothing a child.

Mr. Behrens was apt to make his visits at a late hour; but in a little time all risk of his appearing at Yarrow House would be over—and so would be the day of grace for which she had prayed. It had begun very brightly, but it seemed to be going down in shadow.

They sat down without a word. He would not, out of his love for her, speak out his affront and shame; but the bitterness of a fine lady's scorn had not passed him by. Dull though he was, he could suffer.

While he was asking himself in his bewildered way what he had done to bring it on him, the sound of voices and steps broke on their silence. Tilly moved impatiently. The voice that spoke had no familiarity to her ear; but Uncle Bob drew himself together with a dull shiver. He knew that high, scornful note.

"Believe me, you are very fortunate," it said. "There is nothing left for you to do. You will be spared even the necessity of visiting a jeweller's, and groaning over it, as I know you young men do. The diamonds are superb. I have none such now; I certainly had none such before I was married."

"You would not have worn them if you had. Why don't you say so?"

Tilly, who had scarcely listened, caught her breath when she heard the voice which made the rejoinder, though at first she had difficulty in recognising it for Fred's; it was so hard.

"How can I tell what I might have done if I had been so inordinately rich?" said the first speaker, languidly. "You have a very splendid career before you. Money, in some people's hands, can do so much. And when you tire of being splendid, you

will have the refreshment of a very original mind to turn to at home. I have been talking to your future uncle."

"Pardon me," said Fred, with a bitterness that seemed intensified by the quietness of his voice; "you are assuming that I shall live with my wife's uncle. I assure you nothing is further from my intention. I mean to spare myself that last humiliation."

"Isn't that a little ungrateful?" said Lady Stanmore, in her high, cool voice.

"Gratitude has its limits," said Fred, who had worked himself into a blind fury of disgust. Her calm disdain had stung his pride till he had to give voice to his venom. "When a man offends you by his very existence, nothing that he can do is likely to awaken your gratitude except his self-extinction. The best that is left is to spend his money a little less unworthily than it would be spent in his hands."

"Ah, I have no doubt that you will find it very possible to spend his money," said Lady Stanmore, turning the floods of her scorn upon him now. She began to find him very odious. She might, in his circumstances, have acted practically as he was about to do; but she owed it to her rank to keep a decent reticence. After all, this young man was of the class she despised, and he showed it by the very riot of his contempt.

Tilly, who had listened at first hardly understanding — how should she understand, indeed? — sat as if she were under a spell. Her hand clutched her uncle's arm, and his hard breathing seemed to be the sound of her own pulsing heart. Then she remembered that this base talk was not meant for her, and she rose suddenly from her seat.

Her first impulse was to walk round the screen of palms and confront Fred and his companion; but she checked herself. Even in the first tumult of her emotions, she was willing to spare him the shame of exposure. She moved forward till she knew that the rustle of her dress, and a fold or two of its bright drapery, must have been heard and seen between the foliage. She was right, for the steps died away.

"That was Miss Burton, was it not?" said Lady Stanmore, without pitying him.

"I trust, for her future peace, she did not overhear our talk. I am told she is devoted to her uncle."

"Yes," said Fred, "she is bound up in him."

He left her without an excuse. Something impelled him to go back and know the worst at once. He went quickly round the palm screen, and met her face to face.

She was standing in front of the seat as if she expected him, and would shield her uncle, who sat there stricken dumb—motionless, except for that heavy breathing that made his broad chest heave and fall.

Tilly looked splendidly beautiful. All her sensibility was turned into a burning indignation which made her feel strong to face anything, and which lit her eyes with fire.

"Yes," she said, as if in answer to a question from him, "we heard you. You will say, perhaps, that we ought not to have listened; but then, we did not think, having given you our trust and love, that anything you could say of us would be a pain to us to hear."

"Not your love—you have never given me that."

"Perhaps not," she said, willing to be just, even now. "I tried to do it; but if I had really loved you, I think I should have died for very shame to-night."

"If you had loved me," he said doggedly, shivering under her lash, but not daring to examine his own baseness yet, "if you had loved me, there might have been some chance of my explaining——"

"Explaining! Your explanation would have been even a greater offence than your original sin! Go now, and leave us. It is all you can do. If anything I can say has power to move you, I beseech you to go quietly."

She turned and gave a swift glance at the figure sitting motionless on the bench. It seemed to move and stir her frozen tenderness.

"Some day," she said, faltering a little, "I may be able to forgive you. I will try to remember only the best. I will try not to think hardly of you; but you must leave us now."

He obeyed her dumbly. Without a word he turned and went.

Then her strength seemed to come back to her. She knelt down by the bench; she put her arm round the bent figure there.

"Come, dear," she said, "lean on me. Do not fear to hurt me, I am very strong to-night. We are going home, now. It is all over, dear; and we are going home to be always together."

CHRONICLES OF THE CHANNEL ISLANDS.

IF in a geographical sense the Channel Islands seem to belong rather to France than Great Britain, historically they occupy a position virtually independent of either country. They are a survival, indeed, of the Duchy of Normandy. In their laws, institutions, language, we have a presentment of that ancient State—unaffected by foreign conquest, uninfluenced by revolution. Here the jargon of feudalism is still heard in the Law Courts; the Seigneur still exists with his fiefs and feudal privileges; the vast undigested bulk of English statute law is unknown to these fortunate islanders; equally so is the logical code of their Continental neighbours. The old coutumier of the days of Duke William and Duke Robert is the lawyer's text-book of to-day. The islands have no Magna Charta, never presented a bill of rights, had no share in the Act of Succession; and yet their inhabitants are just as free, are almost as contented, and are, individually, a good deal more prosperous than the inhabitants of the neighbouring isles of Great Britain.

As far as origin goes, the people of the Channel Islands are closely akin both to their neighbours on the Norman peninsula, and to their more distant English fellow subjects. The Celtic people who settled in South Wales, Cornwall, and Brittany, spread themselves no doubt also over these islands, as well as over the adjacent coasts; but they have left few traces of their presence in the isles, unless, indeed, the dolmens, stone circles, and other rude monuments still to be found are the work of this primitive race. But from the first centuries of our era, and long before the downfall of the Roman Empire, Scandinavian rovers had established themselves here and there about the mouths of rivers, and among the low-lying meadows. The advantages of the Channel Islands for piratic settlements, could hardly have been overlooked by the Northmen. They came, and saw, and conquered. The Celtic inhabitants of the islands, probably, found their position untenable, and migrated to the mainland; and the invaders, occupying the land entirely, gave their own names to every natural feature of the islands. Still there is reason to believe that up to the tenth century these isles acknowledged the supremacy of the Duke of Brittany,

and that they did not come into the possession of Rollo under the treaty of Epte, but were acquired by his successor, William Longsword, at the same time that the Cotentin—the Norman peninsula, partly corresponding to the modern French Department of La Manche—was wrested from the hands of Alan of Bretagne.

Having once become Norman, thus the isles continued, even to the present age. That they were not conquered with the rest of Normandy by the French under Philip Augustus is due, no doubt, to the fourteen miles of stormy sea, which separates the nearest of the islands from the coast of the mainland. A sea not stormy only, but bristling with rocks, encumbered with shoals and quicksands—the wreckage of the land which once joined these scattered islets to the European continent. About these rocks and shoals the full force of the Atlantic tide comes sweeping in, rising from thirty to forty feet and forming violent currents, and rude whirlpools, compared with which the dangers of Seylla and Charybdis are mere child's play. This terrible Channel is known to the French as "la Déroute,"—the Ruin, the Desolation, the sea-path that leads straight to destruction. The hundred miles of the not too quiet sea which separates the Channel Islands from the English coast offers not one tithe of the obstacles and dangers which lurk in the narrow channel of the Déroute.

Here was the real defence of the Channel Islands against the French conquerors of Normandy; added to this was the strong affection the people had for their own Dukes and their own independence—a feeling that has lasted to the present day; for it is rather as "dux Normannorum" than as Queen of England, that our present monarch commands the allegiance of the islanders. And thus they have preserved their language; and with them the rude Norman-French of the *trouvères* and chroniclers of old is still a living tongue. The chief of these old rhyming chroniclers, Wace—the author of the "*Roman du Rou*," which tells us more about the Norman Dukes and the conquest of England than any other record of those times—Wace, the poet, whose lines have the easy-going of a newly macadamised road, was, as he himself tells us, a real Jerseyman.

Wace de l'isle de Gersui,
Ki est en mer verz occident,
Al lieu de Normandi apent,
En l'isle de Jersui fu nez.

As for the old institutions of Normandy,

Jersey possesses them still. Her "*Cour Royale*," modelled on the Exchequer Court of Rouen, for long centuries continued to be the seat of legislative as well as executive authority. In time of difficulty or danger, the "*États*" were summoned—the States, which consisted of the Court itself, with its twelve Justiciars; of the Clergy, the Curés, of the twelve parishes of Jersey; of the Seigneurs of the several fiefs; and of the twelve parish Constables, who represented the commonalty.

In later times, when representative institutions became in the ascendant, fourteen elected Deputies were added to the *États*, and, under this form, the Legislative Assembly of the island still remains. The islands form two grand "*bailliages*," with a Bailli at the head of each; no mere functionary of the comic opera, but President of the Court, Commander of the local levies, Speaker of the House of Legislature, with the general headship of the district under the Royal Governor.

The chief seat of all this ancient discipline is now Saint Heliers, one of the most pleasantly-situated towns in the kingdom. Surrounded on all sides by an amphitheatre of hills, except where the sea sparkles sunnily to the south, the town enjoys a specially mild and equable climate. Above it winds the charming "*Val des Vaux*," more pleasing even than the famous Vaux de Vire, although no race of troubadours has issued therefrom, or owed inspiration to its cider as renowned as that of Normandy. The town takes its name from famous Saint Hilary, who actually, as tradition affirms, suffered martyrdom at the hands of the cruel Normans, as yet unconverted to the faith of which they became the vigorous defenders.

In the Bay of Saint Aubin, outside the harbour of Saint Heliers, is Castle Elizabeth, built in the reign of the virgin Queen on the site of an ancient abbey. The castle occupies a rocky island, accessible at low tide by a causeway a mile long. A gun from the fort announces the moment of sunrise and sunset, and its reverberations may arouse a crowd of ancient memories as we recall the days which have elapsed since the old fort first gave voice from its dark embrasures. Upon its platform Raleigh must have stood, watching the sun go down into the waves, reflecting sadly, perhaps, how the sun of his Royal Mistress was setting too—the sun of his own prosperity and fortunes—and the dark shades of night already falling.

Under the guns of the fort lies a little rocky islet, where Saint Hilary built his humble hermitage, and thence the coast stretches out on either hand with sandy bays, and rocky promontories, dotted at regular intervals with martello towers.

Turning to the eastwards we come to Saint Clement's Bay, with the Seymour tower protecting its entrance a mile and a half out at sea, and then we reach Gorey, once of more importance for trade than Saint Heliers, and with a bay and anchorage far surpassing that of its rival, but now chiefly used by the oyster fishers.

Next, old Mont Orgueil, which, with its grey towers rising from the rocky headland, was once the Acropolis of the island. Who would conquer Jersey must first master Orgueil Castle, standing there in its pride and bidding defiance to the arms of man as well as to the roaring waves.

Against Mont Orgueil came Bertrand Du Guesclin, after winning Normandy from the English; but this nut of further Normandy proved too hard for him to crack.

In the following century, during the English Wars of the Roses, a force of Norman-French came once more against the Islands. Margaret, the Queen, had given them away, bestowed them upon Pierre de Brézé, Seneschal of Anjou, her great champion, to be his in full sovereignty, if he could conquer them. Pierre himself was fighting in the north of England for his Royal Mistress; but he dispatched a strong force of his Norman retainers to take possession of his dominions. The Normans landed all unperceived, escalated the heights, overpowered the garrison, and took the castle by sheer force of surprise. But the islanders mustered in force—they were always strong for the defence of their islands against any foreign foe—and, under the leadership of Philip de Carteret, Seigneur of Saint Ouen, they retook the castle and drove the enemy from the island.

In later times the castle was utilised as a State prison. Here just before the great Civil War, William Prynne, the Puritan, was confined, and improved the occasion by writing a religious poem, called "Rockes Improved, etc.," which he dedicated to "his most highly honoured, special kind friend, Lady Anne Carteret;" whose husband was "Lieutenant-Governor and Bailli of the Isle." The descriptive opening of the poem is a sufficient sample of the rest.

Mount Orgueil Castle is a lofty pile
Within the easterne part of Jersey Isle.
Seated upon a rocke full large and high,
Close to the seashore, next to Normandie.

Prynne's religious sentiments were sure of sympathy in the island, for although the inhabitants were generally loyal to the King, yet there was a strong Calvinistic feeling, especially among the Seigneurs of the isle, an inherited feeling, for their fathers had sympathised with the Huguenots in the great religious wars of the time, and the defeated chiefs of the religion in Normandy proper had often found refuge and support among the islanders.

Always in the history of the isles the name of Carteret appears from one century to another. It is Carteret of Saint Ouen, the chief fief of the island, which has been held by the Carterets, perhaps, from the first settlement of the Normans on the Islands. A Carteret was with Duke William at the battle of Hastings, as Wace himself relates:

De Cartrai Onfrei e Maugier,
Ki estait novel chevalier.

The Château Saint Ouen is one of the few ancient manor-houses of the island. Part of it dates probably from the fifteenth century, and it is stored with ancient heirlooms and pictures, one of which latter represents a perhaps half legendary horse belonging to the Philip de Carteret mentioned above, as the saviour of the island in the fifteenth century; a horse that carried its master through the ranks of the Frenchmen who surrounded him, made some wonderful leaps in its progress, and then fell dead at the gate of the Château, having brought his rider in safety to his own door.

Another Carteret was Bailli of the island in the reign of Henry the Eighth, at a time when the inhabitants were grievously oppressed by the Governor, Sir Hugh Vaughan, whose father, it is contemptuously said, was a Welsh tailor. For all that, he might have been descended from a lofty race, and have been own cousin to the Tudors. Anyhow, he was in high favour with the King and Cardinal, and became a great terror to the islanders, respecting neither the honour of women nor the consciences of men. Opposed by Carteret, he procured that his foe should be accused of high treason, and all his possessions seized. Carteret fled the island, and made his way to Court to plead his own cause before the King. The Duke of Norfolk was his friend, but Vaughan was the protégé of the more powerful Cardinal. It would have gone hard with Carteret, but for his skill with the arbalest, with which he so charmed the heart of Henry at a shooting

party, that the King accorded him all he asked. Vaughan was dismissed from his office, and succeeded by Sir Anthony Ughtred, a cousin of Anne Boleyn's; and during the period of the ascendancy of the latter, the Carterets were high in favour at Court. And hence came the settlement of a branch of the family in England, which has supplied, at least, one eminent statesman to the service of the Crown.

Other names beside that of Carteret, sprung from the ancient seigneurage of the isles, have a familiar sound to English ears. The Saumurez, for instance, noted in our naval wars; Lemprière, better known than loved by the schoolboys of a past generation, for the Classical Dictionary compiled by a scion of the house; the Giffards, who have supplied many gallant captains for sea and land; with many others who have helped to make the greatness of England. And yet with all their loyalty to England, the islanders have had sundry narrow escapes of becoming French subjects. Some of the earlier of these invasions have been already alluded to; the latest attempt at a French conquest deserves a little further space.

It was during the war of American Independence, and the English Navy—with France and Spain, and Holland too, at one time on its hands—was hard pressed to guard the Channel coasts; and the time seemed propitious for France to make an attempt upon the English isles so near her coast. Dumouriez, afterwards a famous soldier of the Republic, was then in command at Cherbourg, and strongly urged the enterprise. Had the affair been entrusted to a skilful soldier, such as the Commandant of Cherbourg, the result might have been different; but the army of the old French monarchy was under altogether aristocratic influences. Thus the Prince of Nassau was selected as the leader of the invasion, and sailed from Saint Malo in the spring of the year 1779, with nine ships, containing fifteen hundred troops. The voyage under favourable circumstances was of only a few hours; but a whole fortnight elapsed before the Prince cast anchor in the Bay of Saint Ouen. Here the ships exchanged a few shots with the forts on shore, and then, the weather being unfavourable for a landing, they sailed back as they came.

Nothing more was done till the Christmas of the following year, when a force was collected—a kind of forlorn hope of fifteen hundred men, volunteers from different

corps—under the command of the Baron de Rullecourt. The French had a few sympathisers on the Island of Jersey, and it is recorded that on Christmas Day a signal fire was seen on the heights between Rosil and La Coupe, while an answering glow appeared in the heavens from the direction of the French coast. This was afterwards supposed to be an intimation that no English cruisers were then in the neighbourhood. Anyhow, on the following day the French flotilla put out to sea from the port of Granville. Again bad weather intervened. The transports were knocking about the seas till the fifth of January, the men exposed to all kinds of hardships, and half-starved with cold and hunger.

The Baron, however, was one of the "vieille roche;" harsh, arbitrary, but determined. Making the point of La Roque towards evening, he disembarked his troops on that lonely and desolate part of the coast, in a bay stuck full of rocks, where several of the transports were wrecked, and their crews perished. With the relics of his force, amounting to seven hundred men, de Rullecourt marched across the country in the dead of night. Not a soul had noticed the landing of the troops, or given warning to the authorities of the island, and the French marched into Saint Heliers before daylight as if they had dropped from the skies. A sentry was shot before he could give the alarm, the main guard were surprised and made prisoners, one man, however, escaping to give the alarm to the regiment—the 78th Highlanders—who were quartered on Gallows Hill, above the town. The Governor—Major Corbet—was made prisoner, with the whole civil and military administration. De Rullecourt, concealing the smallness of his force, impressed upon the captive Governor the desperate nature of the situation. The whole island was in the power of the French, who had dispersed all the forces opposed to them. It only remained to save bloodshed by signing a formal capitulation. The Governor weakly consented to this course. The first object of the French Commander was to obtain possession of Fort Elizabeth, then considered almost impregnable, and commanding every approach to the harbour of Saint Heliers. Captain Mulcaster, of the Engineers, was in command of the castle, and to his coolness was due probably the preservation of the island. The Governor despatched a formal order for the surrender of the fortress, under the

terms of the capitulation. A French officer accompanied the Governor's messenger to arrange the transfer of the post. The English Captain pooh-poohed the whole matter. He thrust the Governor's despatch into his pocket apparently unread. He did not understand French, and could not be bothered; and his visitors were bundled out with scant ceremony. But when, shortly afterwards, a French detachment appeared on the causeway, now laid bare by the falling tide, the guns of the fort opened briskly upon them.

Nor were the Governor's orders received in any better spirit by the gallant Highlanders. The militia of the island had assembled at the first alarm, and joined the regular troops on Gallows Hill. It was soon decided to attack the French in Saint Heliers from several different points, and to recapture the town by assault. Major Peirson, of the Ninety-fifth Regiment, took the command of the chief column. The French were drawn up in the market place, with two or three small field-pieces commanding the various approaches. They made a gallant resistance, but presently broke under the determined attack of superior numbers. In the moment of victory, Major Peirson, who gallantly headed the assault, was mortally wounded. The scene is represented in a noted picture by David Copley; and engravings of the same hero vied in popularity with the "Death of Wolfe," and are still sometimes to be seen in print-shop windows. At about the same time, de Rullecourt, standing on the steps of the Court-house, was struck by a bullet in the mouth, and soon after expired.

The Bailiage of Guernsey, which includes Alderney and Sark with the little island of Jethou, for the most part shares the laws and institutions of its neighbour, Jersey; and can recount even more attempts at conquest by the French. That it was conquered in the reign of Edward the Third by a Welsh Prince is a rather startling announcement; but it is certainly a fact that one Owen, a Welshman, of the Royal line no doubt, although Welsh authorities are silent about him, did actually take possession of Guernsey on behalf of the French King, and held it for several years. This invasion is still preserved in tradition on the island as the descent of the Aragonais; the chief part of the assailants having been mercenaries from the kingdom of Aragon, in the pay of France. As for

Alderney, it stands out something like a huge battery, scarped and grooved with the immense defensive works which at one time or other have engulfed so much English treasure. Beyond, lie the Caskets; those famous rocks which have caused the destruction of so many gallant ships. There struck the "Blanche Nef," and perished the son and daughter of Henry, the great Plantagenet; and before and after, stretches an endless roll of wrecks, even down to our own times. For although now well defined by powerful lights that shine out far over the seas, yet these Caskets seem akin to the loadstone rocks of the "Arabian Nights"; and during thick fogs in the Channel they still may count upon their victims.

LINDLEY MURRAY.

"PAUCIS notus, paucioribus ignotus," is the inscription which marks the grave of Burton, who wrote the "Anatomy of Melancholy," and with equal truth and fitness may the words stand at the commencement of this article.

The name of Lindley Murray is, indeed, familiar to us as a household word, and his works, if not exactly popular, which school-books never are, have attained to a world-wide celebrity, and almost to a universal circulation; but of the man himself, his personality, his character, his history, we know nothing, or next to nothing. Nor does the study of his chief work help to increase our knowledge in this respect. He gives us his opinion as to the wisdom of Socrates and Plato; he seems to suggest some impossible kind of relation between eagles' wings and the Drapers' Company; and he mentions not only that he loved Penelope, but that Penelope was loved by him. This is all, however; and the avowal, though interesting in itself, is isolated, fragmentary, and tantalising. There is a reproach underlying the old truism, that the world knows nothing of its greatest men; and, though Lindley Murray can hardly claim a place in such a category, still it may not be undesirable for us to learn somewhat of the life-career of one who fills an honourable, indeed an almost unique, position in our educational literature.

He was born in 1745, at Swetara, Pennsylvania, the eldest of the twelve children of a prosperous Quaker, who was at once a miller, a shipowner, and a merchant.

Early in life young Lindley developed a wild and unmanageable temperament, and when little more than an infant clambered out on the roof and refused to return until guaranteed against punishment. At school he was smart and intelligent, rather than diligent or industrious. He had no disinclination to study in itself, but the acquisition of knowledge interfered with amusement, and he often played truant. Boy-like he had a fondness for teasing animals, though without any cruel intention, and this propensity remained with him until, in matured years, he was cured of it by the following occurrence. Being in London in 1771, he went to see some elephants kept in the Royal stables at Buckingham Palace, and while there managed to abstract some of the food placed before one of them; some weeks after he paid a second visit, having forgotten all about the matter; but the elephant's memory was more retentive, and he aimed with his trunk a furious blow at the future grammarian, which the latter with great difficulty avoided.

An incident in 1759, when he was only fourteen years of age, illustrates in a remarkable manner his strength of character and firmness of purpose. Having received a severe beating from his father for spending an evening at his uncle's house on an occasion when it was impossible for him to obtain the permission, which his parents would not have refused if at home, the sense of injustice rankled so much in his breast that he determined to run away. His father, a short time before, had presented him with some imported watches, in order to develop the trading instinct, in which he was somewhat lacking, so that the lad was not destitute of funds. His plan of emancipating himself was an extraordinary one for a boy of fourteen to adopt. He obtained a suit of clothes different to those he usually wore, which were probably of the Quaker cut, and actually placed himself at a boarding-school at Burlington, New Jersey, intending to acquire a knowledge of French before beginning the world on his own account. For some time he remained here happily enough until meeting one day, in Philadelphia, a gentleman who knew him, he was entrusted with an important letter, and asked to deliver it personally in New York; this he conscientiously did; but, being detained in the city, he was discovered by his uncle and with difficulty induced to return

home. Here all was made easy; a tutor was procured for him; he joined eagerly in the proceedings of a debating club; and, manifesting a taste for law, his determination overcame his father's opposition to this choice of a profession; and he was bound, or articulated, to the family lawyer, having for his fellow-pupil, John Jay, afterwards celebrated as an American statesman.

Having been called to the Bar, he married in 1767, and for a few years lived in England.

Finding on his return to America, in 1771, that legal business was almost in abeyance owing to the political troubles of the Revolution, he purchased a seaside residence at Islip, Long Island, and spent his time fishing and boating, at the same time restoring his health which was not very robust.

After four years he came back to New York, and, seeing no better prospect than before of professional occupation, he boldly entered into trade, for which he had hitherto shown no aptitude. Either his ability was good, or his good fortune very great, or more probably both were favoured by the circumstances of the time; but, whatever was the cause, his commercial enterprise was rapidly successful; and shortly after the Declaration of Independence he retired on a competence which lasted him for the remainder of his life.

He acquired a beautiful house on the Hudson, a few miles from the city, and was looking forward to a future of happy ease, close to his friends, freed from business anxieties, and furnished with occupation and amusement by his gun, his garden, and his boat. Such dreams, however, he was never permitted to realise. His health began to decline and his limbs to lose their power. The air at his river-side "paradise" did not agree with him; medicinal springs and country resorts proved equally inefficacious; and, finally, his doctors declared that his best prospect of health lay in a residence in England, recommending the air of Yorkshire as the most suitable to his constitution.

Accordingly, in 1784, he left America, and, after some time spent in looking out for a suitable house, he finally fixed himself at Holdgate, within a mile of York, from which he never afterwards removed. His bodily health was fairly good, but his power of motion grew weaker and weaker, and before long entirely failed. Confined thus to the house, principally to a single

room, he naturally turned to study, and at length to authorship, as a resource, and in 1787, he produced his first book. This was a series of sketches intended to show the power of religion over the mind, especially in time of misfortune or at the approach of death, and was illustrated by examples ranging from Socrates, Confucius, and Saint Paul, to Richelieu, Cæsar Borgia, and Dr. Doddridge. This he published anonymously, and distributed it gratuitously amongst his neighbours; but the book thus modestly introduced became very popular, and eventually ran through eighteen editions.

Some of his friends having established a school at York for "the guarded education of young women," Mr. Murray delivered some informal lectures to the teachers on the methods of imparting a knowledge of the English language. These little lectures or addresses he, at their request, expanded into book-form, and so, in 1795, his "English Grammar" was offered to the public. Its success was immediate and unmistakeable; and, thus encouraged, he wrote a book of Grammatical Exercises, followed by a Key; and, in 1797, made an Abridgement of the Grammar, which, even in his own lifetime, reached its eighty-sixth edition.

Next appeared an "English Reader," and in 1800, a "Sequel," or more advanced volume, which was very highly and deservedly praised. It was an enormous improvement on the books of a similar kind then existing. Its selections, which aimed at being interesting as well as instructive, were marked by judgement and taste, and comprised such poems as "The Traveller," "The Deserted Village," "Gray's Elegy," and "Grongar Hill," with shorter extracts from Thomson, Milton, Cowper, Crabbe, and Prior.

In 1802 he wrote "Le Lecteur François;" a few years later, an "Introduction" to the same; and, in 1804, an English Spelling Book, and also a small Primer for very young children.

The Spelling Book was as well and carefully executed as his other books, and met with similar acceptance. Nearly fifty editions have been called for, and it has been published, not alone in England and America, but at Calcutta and even at Cadiz.

His other writings were few and unimportant. A small tract against theatrical and frivolous amusements appeared at Philadelphia in 1799, and a "Doctrinal Compendium for Young Members of the

Society of Friends," a little book inculcating the duty of daily perusing the Bible, and a pamphlet biography of a religious friend of his, Mr. Tuke, from time to time issued from his pen. This, with a volume of extracts from "Horne's Commentary on the Psalms," was all he ever wrote; but these productions did not terminate his literary activity. He considered it his duty to make such additions and improvements as were found necessary in those works which had received so large an amount of public favour.

Urged by his London publishers he issued, in 1808, a library edition in two volumes of his Grammar, with its Exercises and Key, and personally superintended the alterations and revisions which were called for by an interminable series of new editions. This he did from a sense of moral obligation, and not influenced either by desire or prospect of profit, for he had disposed of his copyrights on terms and for objects equally creditable to himself.

At the present day, when the rival claims of publishers and authors are so hotly canvassed, it is interesting to read his account of the commercial side of his literary experience. He says of his publishers, "they gave a liberal price for the books; and, I must say, that in all our transactions together—which have not been very limited—they have demonstrated great honour and uprightness, and entirely justified my confidence and expectation. I have great pleasure in knowing that the purchase of the copyrights has proved highly advantageous to them; and though it has turned out much more lucrative than was at first contemplated, they are fully entitled to the benefit."

For his Grammar, Abridgement, Exercises, and Key, he obtained eight hundred pounds; for the Reader, Introduction and Sequel, seven hundred and fifty; for his French books, seven hundred pounds; and for his Spelling Book and Primer, five hundred pounds. He at one time contemplated a kind of expurgated edition of the poets; but, happily perhaps for his reputation, never attempted to carry it into effect. His means being sufficient for his simple mode of life, and having no family, he devoted all his literary income to charitable and benevolent objects. He furnished a brief autobiographical sketch in a series of letters, which comprise the history of his life down to 1809; and this forms the basis of the volume of Memoirs published after his death. From this date, the

record of his history is almost devoid of incident. In 1810 he was admitted an Honorary Member of the Historical Society of New York, and in 1816 of the Literary and Philosophical Society of the same city. These were the only literary or academic distinctions he ever received. Indeed, so retired was the life he led, from temperament as well as necessity, that many of those acquainted with his writings were either altogether ignorant of, or very imperfectly informed as to, the facts of his existence; and Dr. Blair, who corresponded with him, shared the most generally received opinion that he was a schoolmaster. The Edgeworths, and a few other visitors of social or literary distinction, called on him in his retreat; and were much impressed by his kindly manner and dignified appearance, and by his powers of conversation, so far as his weakness of voice permitted him to exercise them.

Of his works it is not necessary to say much. Their merit is proved by the permanence as well as the width of their popularity; and their general utility has never been called in question. Their plan and method have been gradually superseded by the more logical and scientific system of our own time; and even technical inaccuracies have been pointed out by Mr. Moon and other critics. The dreadful "and which" whose discovery in "The Heart of Midlothian" has so shocked Mr. Andrew Lang, is also to be found in the Grammar of Lindley Murray. We smile, too, while we differ from his dictum, that as a matter of gender "we perceive an impropriety" in calling a woman a philosopher or an astronomer, though "we can say she is an architect, a botanist, a student," so that a correct designation might be given to Bees o' Hardwick, while it was denied to Mrs. Somerville. But, even if his errors and inelegancies were ten times more numerous, they could not seriously detract from the solid value of his achievement. His closing years were passed in great pain; but his intellect was always clear, and he never ceased altogether from work. True, he laboured in English, and not in Greek; and his work was synthetic and constructive, rather than analytic and critical. Otherwise, he is like enough to Mr. Browning's hero:

So, with the throttling hands of death at strife,
Ground he at grammar;
Still, thro' the rattle parts of speech were rife:
While he could stammer.

He settled Hoti's business—let it be!

Properly based Oun—

Gave us the doctrine of the enclitic De,
Dead from the waist down.

His maimed and suffering existence was prolonged until the sixteenth of February, 1826, when he expired somewhat suddenly, in the eighty-first year of his age. Through all the long illness which made up his life, he had been nursed with the most careful attention by his wife, to whom, on the anniversary of their wedding, which was also her birthday, he never failed to present a little literary offering of tenderness and affection.

With sweetest memories mingled, and with hope.

She survived him for some years, and on her death, his property was, according to his will, devoted to the manumission and education of negro slaves, and to missionary efforts amongst the American Indians. He never took any part in politics, and would, perhaps, have experienced some difficulty in choosing a side; for, though he loved America, and regretted his enforced exile, he was also warmly attached to England; and of that British Constitution under which he lived, he expressed the opinion, "it has stood the test of ages and attracted the admiration of the world." He was neither a genius nor a hero, not even in the strict sense, a scholar; but there is an actual and an abiding character of usefulness in his effort to lighten "the long and tedious track of slavish grammar." He was a good man; patient, benevolent, tolerant, with a quick intelligence, vivid and active sympathies, and an energetic tenacity of will—a graft of American hickory upon English oak.

LONDON SHOWS.

THE streets festooned with flags; the roar of the City traffic stilled, and instead only the tramp of countless footsteps; windows filled with faces—children's faces, young women's faces, all kinds of faces where, in a general way, nothing is to be seen but wire blinds and dusty ledgers; mud and slush on the pavements, and everywhere a great spread of umbrellas glistening with rain; such is the general aspect of things to one waiting patiently for the Lord Mayor's Show on the edge of a damp kerbstone by Ludgate Circus. It needs, indeed, the sight of great Saint Paul's showing hazily from the top of the hill, and little Saint Martin's spire

that does not reach its big neighbour's shoulder, to convince the spectator that he is really within the limits of London City, so unfamiliar is the aspect of the scene. The Circus is a whirlpool of turbid humanity, prevented from settling into a compact mass by the benevolent efforts of a few mounted police, who circle round and round. But, in pauses of the general uproar of the shouts, yells, whistling, hooting, shrill cries, may be heard the bells ringing out in full volley overhead; sounds which alone, amongst all the turmoil, have retained the ancient note of free and careless rejoicing.

Certainly, a London crowd of to-day takes nothing very seriously. There is a mocking, bitter laugh for the most venerated institutions, and the many-tongued voice has an acrid, cynic accent. The steady, respectable element, indeed, holds its tongue, and keeps an anxious watch over its pockets; and it is the looser, wilder members of the crowd who are seen and heard the most. But how numerous these last, how threatening, and how quickly increasing and gathering strength, it only needs an occasional day in the streets to realise. And the most discouraging part of the business is the immense contingent of idle youths; most of whom have passed under, what ought to have been, the civilising effects of education in the Board Schools, but who certainly show to no greater advantage than the roughs and loafers of a former era. Indeed, the clamorous voices of the swarms of idle or half-idle youth who will earn no daily bread, nor even the pinch of salt that should accompany it, to whom any real apprenticeship to any decent craft, or trade, or mystery, or any reliable way to earn an honest living, is altogether inaccessible, seem to reproach us for all the pains and parade which we have given to teaching.

Perhaps it is in deference to the keen unfriendly commentary of the streets, that the pageant of to-day assumes a somewhat apologetic character. Here are emblems, if you please—if only the driving rain will permit us to see them—emblems of the benefits conferred by the wealth of the great city, open spaces, Epping Forest, Burnham Beeches, with wood rangers, hawking parties, shepherds, and shepherdesses: here is Education, far more handsome, genial, and smiling, than she generally appears to her enforced votaries; here is Charity distributing her dole; nurses to bind up the wounds of the suffering,

emblems of the far-reaching beneficence of our noble hospitals. But for all this does anyone care of all the loose disorderly crowd that, hustling, yelling, screeching, whirls along in heedless turmoil?

Truly here is a contrast, if one could realise it, between such a hurly-burly as this, and the dignified, somewhat solemn function of earlier days. The first beginning of the stately progress of the Chief Magistrate of the City was to accompany His Lordship, not only in respect for him and his office, but to make sure of his coming back again in safety. It was in the last year of King John, or the first of his successor, that the first record of the practice appears, and at that time the City went solidly for the Magna Charta; Barons against the King and the Pope; and the march to Westminster was a display of force as well as an official pageant.

It was long after this—indeed just before the beginning of the Wars of the Roses—that the progress by water was first inaugurated. Then Sir John Norman built a richly ornamented barge for his own use, and the twelve great City Companies followed his example; and this, too, was something of a demonstration of the City's power over the river. The water progress continued till well into the present century; and as one of the most picturesque and taking features of the show, it seems a pity that it was ever abandoned. Now that the Embankment affords a fine and uninterrupted view of the river from Blackfriars to Westminster, it is to be regretted that there is so little to be seen on the grand historic stream. Even the once bustling traffic of the penny steamers is in danger of ceasing altogether; and the river from London Bridge to Lambeth, once gay with every kind of boat, with courtiers, cavaliers, and citizens in brave apparel, with pageants of all kinds, with games and water frolics, where sometimes a King might be seen in his gilded barge, on his way to the palace; sometimes a noble hurried along with muffled oars to Traitor's Gate and the frowning mysterious Tower—this gay, bright, and yet darksome and terrible river is abandoned now to tugs and coal barges, or now and then a noisy, fussy launch, or quiet, grim police boat. And what a quiet pleasant passage it would be for the incoming Lord Mayor! And if he could make up his mind to return the same way, what dangers to the peace of London and the safety of her peaceful citizens would be altogether avoided!

And recalling the old London streets, their quaint gables and overhanging timber structures, quiet often enough, and yet often surcharged with life; with nobles, citizens, apprentices, handsome City dames and pretty maidens, old greybeards in their starched ruffs, the liverymen in their gowns—all the quaint pageant passing through as a thing supremely respectable and desirable; ah! it is the chivalry of old as compared with the rough-and-tumble of a street row.

But even compared with the days of our youth, how great a change has come over the spirit of the scene! Advanced spirits might have criticised the affair with cynicism; but there, to old and young, was a pleasant, goodly show that all liked to look upon; a show with a flavour of Gog and Magog about it, with the men in veritable armour, even if sometimes they staggered and swayed in their saddles from the weight of it, and though the horses themselves might scarcely show the blood and bone of the knightly destrier.

Still, it was all delightful for the boys with their shining faces and great white collars! And what pretty girls they met, those boys! and how they all feasted together, in emulation of the Lord Mayor's banquet, and danced and flirted in those days before the deluge, the screaming, howling, roaring, blaspheming deluge: and then there was the drive home at night through the merry, glittering streets; not so bright with gas and electricity, but how much more radiant in the light of love and hope, and in the glow of the good time that was coming!

THREE CAROLINES.

"THE fierce light that beats upon a throne," has scorched up many reputations. Our Carolines suffered, as did our Catharines; but in a somewhat different way. For levity and indiscretion, Henry the Eighth had the axe and block; while George the Fourth employed a still much more cruel weapon, "the delicate investigation."

But against the first of our Carolines, her of Brandenburg Ansbach, no one ever breathed a word of scandal. Her early bringing up was not good for a girl. Her mother, widowed when she was four years old, married Elector John George of Saxony; and morals at Dresden were lower than at Louis the Fifteenth's Court,

without even the poor varnish of French refinement. John George was meditating open bigamy when he died in 1694, and his stepdaughter was taken in hand by Sophia Charlotte, daughter of the Electress Sophia of Hanover, and wife of Frederick the First of Prussia.

Sophia Charlotte was no ordinary woman; she was able to hold her own with her mother's friend, philosopher Leibnitz; and to her Caroline owed the philosophic bent which marked her in an especially frivolous age.

Of course the first thing to do with a German Princess, high-born, serene, a "durch-laucht" (light through and through), was to get her eligibly married. Then, as now, religion in such a case was a matter of indifference. So, when Archduke Charles, afterwards Emperor Charles the Sixth, and titular King of Spain, appeared as a possible suitor, Father Orban, a Jesuit, was set to prepare Caroline for the dignity of marrying into the House of Hapsburg. But Caroline had a will of her own, and, when argument failed, she disconcerted the good Jesuit with floods of tears; and she was backed up by her grandmother, the old Electress Sophia, who meant to marry her to her grandson, the Electoral Prince of Hanover. Leibnitz, too, aided her in resistance, dictating the letter in which she broke off the negotiations. So she married her Hanoverian, who, in due course, became our George the Second; "Providence," as Addison expresses it, "having kept a reward in store in order that such exalted virtue and pious firmness might not go unrequited even in this life." It seems to have been a love match; she was pretty and engaging, and small-pox, which attacked her two years after, did not destroy her charms. In politics, she was George Augustus's right hand.

Queen Anne was still alive; but the question of the succession was being fiercely debated, and George Augustus was much more anxious about it than his father, whom it more immediately concerned. Caroline studied the workings of parties, puzzling to one accustomed to the straightforward despotism of petty German Courts. It must have puzzled her, too, after the amiable laxity of German beliefs, to find people actually making religion a political weapon, and crying out against her as "a Calvinist, who would not take the Sacrament."

She may not have understood that sacrament-taking was an indispensable qualifica-

tion for any office, much more for that of Queen, and was probably scandalised to learn that men of openly irreligious lives, who never entered church at any other time, took it when they were made tax-collectors or clerks to justices.

The report was untrue. She, doubtless, conformed to English usage, and to talk of Leibnitz's pupil as a Calvinist is to misuse words. With her old master she still corresponded. When the Electress Sophia died, he had been handed over to her as a legacy, and was certainly not slighted. Indeed, everything proves that the Duchess of Orleans was right in saying, "Caroline has a heart—a rare thing as times go."

The quarrel between George the First and his son put her in an awkward position. George extended his anger to "cette diablesse Madame la Princesse," and turned them both out of St. James's Palace—in fact, he was planning to send them off to America. Caroline found the plan in his cabinet.

Richmond Lodge became, in her hands, a centre of attraction for wits and beauties. It had its "Merlin's Cave," a grotto with a library, and figures of Merlin and others, and Stephen Duck for librarian. Grottoes were the fashion. Pope's, at Twickenham, would nowadays be considered a very poor place, despite the "Cornish spars as bright as gems" sent by Dr. Borlase. But an artificial age was not exacting in such matters. Pope and Tickell sang its glories; Lord Harvey and Walpole wrote about it. The only fly in Caroline's ointment was the presence of Mrs. Howard, afterwards Lady Suffolk. Strangely enough, she was able to get on with this lady, and to retain the chief influence over her husband. Indeed, when, long after George Augustus had succeeded to the throne, he and his mistress quarrelled, Caroline wrote that she was "glad and sorry," fearing that the lady's successor might be unbearable. But though Caroline prudently tolerated Mrs. Howard, she was implacable towards those who, like Lord Bathurst, tried to form a Howard party. Sir Spencer Compton was to have been Prime Minister, but he had erred in this way; and, moreover, Walpole, who supplanted him, was really a far abler man, by taking up with him showed Caroline's insight. Besides, he offered the Queen a substantial reason for favouring him by promising to double the fifty thousand pounds a year which Compton had proposed as her

jointure. Her husband she managed thoroughly: first, by making herself beautiful for his sake; next, by her strange complaisance for his foibles; lastly, by the tact which made his immense vanity fancy that he was managing everything. It was Pope's—

Charms by accepting, by submitting away,
Yet has her humour most when she obeys.

The wits were puzzled at the admirable way in which they got on; her alkali, it was said, corrects the acid of his temper. She and he were thoroughly at one in hating their son Frederick. She refused to see him on her death-bed, an extreme way of treating a certainly unloveable child. English institutions, he used to praise, but not sincerely. To the last, she was a German Princess, "always partial to the Emperor, jealous of the prerogative, and as fond of troops as the King himself."

Her anxiety for Hanover led her more than once to try to worry Walpole into going to war.

It was a hard and joyless reign; and her one compensation was that she tried to influence every appointment. The King always made her regret when he went to Germany—another ground of quarrel with the Prince of Wales. During such times she took care to live quietly at Kensington, avoiding all display.

In appointing Bishops she was very active, though she could not get a see for her favourite, Dr. Samuel Clarke. For Bishops, as Bishops, she had scant reverence, roundly rebuking the whole Bench for opposing the Quakers' Tithe Bill; but for some of them, as individuals, she had a strong regard.

Butler's "Analogy" she used to have read to her while her hair was being dressed up in the preposterous fashion of the time.

Very few Queens, none in this country, have had weekly gatherings of learned men—Sherlock, Hoadley, Berkeley, Clarke—for reading and discussion. Clarke, by her wish, got into controversy with Leibnitz about time and space. "They are only imaginary existences," said the latter—"subjective" as we should say nowadays. "No," replied Samuel Clarke, "that space and time really exist follows as a necessary consequence from the existence of God. To annihilate time and space is beyond even the power of Omnipotence." All this is poor stuff, worthy of Pope's sneer about "Clarke's high a priori road." But they were better than

play and scandal, and prove in Queen Caroline an appreciation of "culture," and a longing for better things than the ordinary growth of St. James's and the other Courts. She needed all the mental stimulus she could get, for her evenings she had to spend in "knotting," while the King sat by and railed against everything and everybody. "Main good at pumping," Walpole found she had become by dint of practice; a good hater, too; and a good dissembler; but patient almost beyond example among women, exercising her patience for the good of her husband and his subjects.

Horace Walpole says she thought too highly of her power of managing others, and hints that her plans were oftener seen through than she imagined. But Horace was her special aversion, though she thought so highly of his brother; and he knew it.

If, as they say, she never looked up after receiving a specially unkind letter from the Prince of Wales, we may agree with the Duchess of Orleans, that she had a heart.

Her spelling was as bad as that of the great French ladies of a generation earlier; for instance, one would hardly recognise Leibnitz's "Theodicé" under such a phonetic form as "Deodyces."

Her granddaughter, Caroline Matilda, posthumous child of the Prince of Wales, was married at fifteen to the Danish Prince Royal, afterwards Christian the Seventh, a feeble-minded, self-indulgent lad, who began by treating her coldly, and soon neglected her for others. His girl-wife's friends and advisers were all sent away, and in her loneliness she began to attach herself to Struensee, the King's physician, a confirmed lady-killer. He, at first, exerted himself honestly to bring the King and Queen to a better understanding; but when he was appointed Councillor and Reader to King and Queen, he thought the latter might help him to greatness. So, with Brandt, an ex-page, and Charles, Count of Rantzau, he compassed the fall of Minister Bernstorff, and the three formed a Government which was to give freedom to the Press and to effect many other reforms. For a while, Struensee seemed to have everything in his hands; he and Brandt were made Counts; his orders were declared to be as valid as if signed by the King. Altogether, except that it ended tragically, the situation was not unlike that in the novel called "King Otto." The Queen and Struensee set Mrs.

Grundy at defiance; she in her riding-habit, walking arm-in-arm with him past the corpse of the Queen Dowager, which was lying in state. The Court was full of his creatures; almost all "people of quality" kept away from it; and an eye-witness said it looked like a pack of servants, who, in their master's absence, were playing at high life below stairs.

Meanwhile, the people began to grow discontented. They had expected the reforms would bring about a golden age, and were disappointed. Brandt, too, unlike Struensee, who seems to have been severely upright in money matters, began to put his hands into the Royal treasury. Popular suspicion, once roused, began spreading the wildest rumours. The King was to be seized and imprisoned, and the Queen made Regent—an absurd change—for the presence of this poor specimen of a King, who was qualifying for delirium tremens, and could find no other fault with his sprightly wife, but "*elle est si blonde*," was of course a protection to the triumvirate. However, nothing came of the popular discontent; a riot of Norwegian sailors was put down; and it was only when the three began to quarrel, Brandt plotting to get rid of Struensee, and then Rantzau determining to overthrow them both, that they fell. The story goes that Sir R. Murray Keith, our envoy, offered Struensee a large sum of money if he would leave the kingdom; and that the Queen said: "If he goes I shall go too, and shall get my bread by singing. I know I've got a pleasant voice." As he would not go, the Queen Dowager, Juliana Maria, was won over by Rantzau showing her a forged conspiracy for putting her son off the throne. Her help made Rantzau strong enough to act, for it carried with it the guards who had mutinied at Christmas, but had been won back by her intervention. And so, in mid January, at a masked ball at the Palace, Struensee and Brandt, and their chief supporters were arrested, and Caroline and her little daughter were hurriedly driven to Kronberg, a castle near Elsinore. As she looked back she saw Copenhagen in a blaze of light; the people, in whose service Struensee had, at first, really worked hard, thus showed their joy at the fall of Queen and favourite. Keith did not desert her, advising her, when a Commission began—a parallel to our Prince Regent's "delicate inquiry"—not to answer, but to dispute the authority of the Court. Her daughter's

legitimacy was satisfactorily established; while as to her guilt—well, at last Struensee, probably under torture, confessed; but about her there are the most contradictory reports.

Everything respecting her, during this stay at Kronberg, is open to doubt; except the two facts that she affectionately nursed her daughter through measles, and that she was preached to by a succession of Court divines. Her letters to her brother George are said to be unauthentic; so is the statement that she confessed on being assured that her doing so would save Struensee's life. Her advocate, Uldall, says she strongly asserted her innocence. Guilty, or not guilty, she was condemned; her marriage declared null and void; and her name struck out of the Prayer Book; while Struensee and Brandt were of course put to death. George the Third at first threatened; but afterwards he was persuaded that things had best be taken quietly. The public, however, made his apathy a ground for bullying Lord North's Government; and when news came that Caroline was to be banished to Aalborg in Jutland, a squadron was ordered to sail for Copenhagen. A few hours before it weighed anchor, word arrived that Keith's advice had prevailed, and that Caroline was to be set free, retaining the title of Queen, and solaced with a pension of five thousand pounds a year. Three English frigates went to see her safely out of Danish waters; and she left Elsinore under a Royal salute, taking up her abode at Celle, near Hanover, where a Court was organised for her in due form by those Past Masters in Royal etiquette, the Hanoverian authorities. Here she had a theatre, a "*jardin français*," plenty of English books, and the company of Sir Nathaniel Wraxall, a young traveller in search of adventure, who came as secret agent of a knot of exiled Danish nobles at Hamburg. Their object was to get up a revolution, and to restore Caroline and themselves. She was willing enough, but wished to get help and countenance from her brother. Wraxall posted off to London; but George was cautious. He would be delighted at their success; but, in his position, he really could not help them actively. Wraxall did not despair; and was still in London when news came of the Queen's death.

"Poison," said the gossips. "Inflammation of the throat," said the doctors. "Diphtheria," we should say; for she had

spent a good deal of time in dressing fantastically the death chamber of a page whom she kept more than a week "lying in state."

Is her death-bed letter to her brother asseverating her innocence, authentic, and did she at the last make a similar statement to her pastor? Anyhow, Pastor Lehzen published an edifying account; and Wraxall, in the "*Annual Register*," stoutly defended her. She may have been only injudicious; wholly unfit to stand in the fierce light that beats upon a throne; culpably regardless of Mrs. Grundy, as is shown by her penchant for male costume. A portrait at Copenhagen represents her riding like a man in "man's" dress.

Few private people can venture to act out the motto, which the Scotch laird put over his gate: "Men say: what say they? Who cares what they say?" Certainly no Royalties can do so, as the third of our Carolines also found to her cost. She, Caroline Amelia Elizabeth, of Brunswick Wolfenbüttel, must have been a very fascinating girl. Fond of children, she would stop in her walks to pet them. Everybody who has written about her says what a kind, good-hearted child she was. The Duke of York was so charmed with what he saw of her at her father's Court, that he recommended her as a suitable bride for the Prince of Wales. The nation wanted an heir to the throne; and the Prince wanted his debts paid. So a bargain was struck; his income was raised from sixty thousand pounds to one hundred and twenty-five thousand pounds, of which twenty-five thousand pounds were to be set aside to pay the six hundred and thirty thousand pounds which he owed. Then he was to have twenty-seven thousand pounds for wedding expenses, twenty-eight thousand pounds for jewels and plate, and twenty-six thousand pounds to complete Carlton House. A pretty good bribe, that, considering the value of money a century ago, even for a Prince by no means disposed to matrimony—already married, in a good many people's eyes, to Mrs. Fitzherbert. His bride was to have a jointure of fifty thousand a year. How they voted away the public money in those good old days!

Caroline Amelia was moderate. Her father's Court, though as gay and lively as most North German Courts have always been stiff and dull, was not expensive; and she positively refused to have more than thirty-five thousand pounds a year settled on her.

In those days, even Royal brides were at

the mercy of winds and waves, and hostile fleets; and from New Year's Day, 1795, till the end of March, Caroline waited patiently at Hanover, till weather and the French permitted her escort to sail. When she got to Greenwich, Lady Jersey was, with a cynicism of which only His Royal Highness could have displayed, sent to meet her. "Who is Lady Jersey?" she would naturally ask; and scandal—telling the truth for once—would reply: "The reigning favourite, bound therefore to be your implacable enemy, and to do her best to estrange you and your husband from the very outset." This was on the fifth of April; three days later the marriage took place at Saint James's, at eight at night; the Prince, says scandal—perhaps falsely this time—calling out to Lord Malmesbury when he first set eyes on her: "Harris, bring me a glass of brandy," as if the sight was so unpleasant as to need a restorative.

Next January the Princess Charlotte was born, and His Royal Highness straightway got a deed of separation, Heaven only knows on what pretext, and Caroline went to live at Shooter's Hill, and then at Montague House, Blackheath. Her "Court" included Sir John Douglas and his wife (a spy), Sir Sidney Smith, Captain Manby, and a few others; and she began to display her old fondness for children by "adopting" and bringing up several. Lady Douglas said she had heard that one of them was her own son; and in consequence Lord Ellenborough and others were set to make the "delicate investigation." Of course, they found it was all idle gossip; Caroline was indiscreet, and given to "think aloud," that was all. The old King was very kind, gave her rooms in Kensington Palace, and often came out with his grandchild to Blackheath to spend a day with her, thereby yet more enraging his implacable Royal Highness.

Princess Amelia, another of her friends, was dead; and she began to be cut off from intercourse with her daughter. Her husband was proclaimed Regent, but she was not even mentioned in the proclamation. At last, in 1813, came the crisis. Mother and daughter had for some time been wholly debarred from meeting, when by accident they met while out driving. His Royal Highness was enraged, and told his daughter—who had also angered him by refusing the Prince of Orange—that he should dismiss all her household, and bring her to Carlton House. She rushed out, jumped into a hackney coach, and drove to her mother. Caroline, however, was spirit-

broken; and when Miss Mercer, and Lord Liverpool, and the Duke of York, and Lord Eldon, and a Bishop had all tried to persuade the girl to obey her father, she too—advised by Lord Brougham—joined her voice with theirs, and mother and daughter were again separated, the latter being hidden away at Cranbourn Lodge, in Windsor Park.

Cut off from her daughter's society, Caroline went abroad, and fell under the influence of the Bergamis. Of these, Bartolomeo had been on General Pino's staff, and Murat offered him a captain's commission, which he refused, preferring the Princess's employment. His brothers became her major-domo and "privy purse"; his sister, Countess Oldi, her lady of honour. For Bartolomeo she bought a barony in Sicily, got him made Knight of Malta and of the Order of St. Caroline, which she instituted, undismayed by the breakdown of a similar Order founded by her aunt-in-law, Christian of Denmark's wife. With this suite she travelled in a fantastic style over half Europe, and then went to Jerusalem, her entry into which was like a carnival procession. All the way she was dogged by His Royal Highness's spies, who, every now and then, tried to seize her papers. George the Third died in 1820, but she (whose name had been left out of the Prayer Books) was never officially informed of it; and at Rome—where she happened to be at the time—they refused her a guard of honour. She was on her way to England. "Stay away, never call yourself Queen, or use any title belonging to the Royal Family, and you shall have fifty thousand pounds a year," were George's terms. But she persisted in coming; and the guns of Dover Castle, no orders having been given to the contrary, gave her a Royal salute. The Londoners took her part with enthusiasm; and Alderman Wood, in whose house she stayed, became the most popular man in the City.

The King met her return by a Bill for Divorce and a charge of adultery with Bergami. It is a wretched story; she had behaved with a levity which would have been unbecoming even in the days when the Duke of York found her a lively, romping, bare-shouldered girl, in her father's rather disreputable Court. She had been indiscreet enough, Heaven knows; but the witnesses were bad enough to make one certain of her innocence, and the evidence was cooked in the most discreditable way. So the matter stands.

The second reading of the Deprivation and Divorce Bill was passed, when suddenly Lord Liverpool announced that he should not proceed to a third reading. Was he moved by Brougham's able defence? Or did Government fear that, if she were found guilty, there would be a popular rising?

Her visit to St. Paul's, to return thanks for her acquittal, was a triumphal procession. No soldiers. "The Queen's guards are the People," was the motto on the banner. Temple Bar was duly closed, and when she reached it, it was opened, as if for Royalty, by the Lord Mayor, who then accompanied her to the Cathedral. Then followed the King's coronation, and her attempt to gain admission. Had she persisted, a riot would have ensued; but she went quietly off, broken down by what was her death-blow. Soon after, she was taken ill at the theatre, and was dead in a week. Even then she did not rest. Her wish was to be taken to the family vault at Brunswick. The Londoners were anxious that her body should go through the City.

"No," said the King, and sent the escort of Life Guards which he had always denied her while alive. The Londoners gained their point; but not till there had been a fight at Hyde Park Corner, in which the soldiers fired on and killed several of "the mob."

England, one feels sure, cannot have been wholly wrong, and England went with her almost with one mind.

"God bless you! We'll bring your husband back to you," said a working man to her.

The tears streamed down her cheeks as she told the story to Lady Charlotte Bury. They could not do that; but they gave her their love, and let us hope she deserved it.

And His Royal Highness—so remorselessly cruel to her—is nothing to be said for him? He was, to begin with, the most spoiled of all spoiled boys. They began by calling him Prince Florizel, and extolling his beauty and his fine voice. He naturally grew up a monster of selfishness, spending ten thousand pounds a year on his coats, cutting old friends with as little compunction as he ill-treated his wife. Yet they say of him—as they do of Nero—that two or three people, mostly servants, loved him; and the one story told to his credit is that, when a groom was found out at stealing, and turned off by the head of the stables, the Prince talked to him very kindly, reinstated him, and made him promise to sin no more—a promise which he kept.

Sad that he could not have bestowed a little kindness on the most unhappy of all our Carolines!

POOR FOLK.

A STORY IN SEVEN CHAPTERS.

By the Author of "*David Ward*," "*The Story of a Sorrow*," "*A Dreadful Mésalliance*," etc. etc.

CHAPTER III.

THAT Mrs. Rayne had believed Tom's story had not appeared credible to Mr. Lipsilt, hence, the brutal crudity of his announcement. It was somewhat Mr. Lipsilt's way to speak in haste, and repent afterwards, and his attention to Mrs. Rayne, as she recovered consciousness, was most fatherly, though tinged with that habitual contempt of his for the follies of the poor.

"To swallow a cock-and-bull story like that, and keep that young blackguard loafing about the house all this time!" Mr. Lipsilt said to himself, with a slow shake of the head. "I wonder did she believe him, or did she only tell herself she believed him?" which question it would have needed a more skilful, mental analyst than Mr. Lipsilt to answer.

"Why did you not prosecute him?" was Mrs. Rayne's first articulate question.

"You mean, why did not Mr. Studd prosecute him?" Mr. Lipsilt had dismissed the observant clerk with a motion of the hand. "I bought Tom off with a trifle for your sake," blushing actually as he admitted this weak-minded artifice. "I thought if he took the lesson to heart it would do him good, and need not hinder his making another start."

"I wonder what will become of him," she said in her dull, despondent way. "He is too old to take out new indentures."

"Yes, and I know too much now to recommend him. But it was folly to think of a trade for him; put him to labour. There are thousands of labouring men in steady work all the year round, and besides, the labourer is really the bone and sinew of the country." Mr. Lipsilt could hardly help regarding other people's troubles from an abstract and reflective point of view.

"I don't think he would wish to labour," was the slow answer.

"I am sure not, but I should make him."

"How?" This simple question stag-

gered the wise man, and he relapsed into the vague again.

"Be firm with him, show him what you expect of him."

"Yes, and he will show me what he expects of me, and I shall probably see more clearly."

"Oh, if you choose to be so weak-minded—" dismissing the subject.

He could not help her; no one could help her. The sorrow was her own, and she must bear it; but it was hard.

Young Tom had already descended to a deeper depth than his father had ever reached, or at least she thought so, for towards strangers old Tom had always been honest.

She could not tell her son what she had discovered—which Mr. Lipsilt would have characterised as more of her weak-mindedness—but she could not keep the chill of a new disgust out of her bearing.

"I wonder has she heard?" Tom asked himself, but did not push surmise the length of investigation. If she had discovered everything, the culprit was of opinion that it did not matter very much, since she had no power to punish him.

"My own children are all worthless," the poor woman told herself, unconsciously binding her affections more closely round her nurseling.

She had not answered Elsie's letter, nor taken any notice of the tidings she had had from home. Her mother was dead—gone, therefore, beyond the reach of reproach or pardon. As to what she had left behind her, "Let them keep it," Mrs. Rayne said to herself bitterly. "It is not likely to bring them a blessing; but, if it does, my grudging it won't matter."

Mrs. Rayne's ideas of blessings were a little confused. She had always striven for what she called blessings, and they had eluded her; and yet, in spite of her own experiences, she clung to the belief, inculcated in her childhood, that wrong-doing is punished even in this world, and that right, in spite of everything, is best.

Of her disappointment in the matter of the money from home she did not speak to anyone. What was the use? If her father had only appointed an executor to the will other than her mother, the thing that was done would have been impossible; but, since he had omitted this, there was nothing more to be said. Mrs. Rayne did not believe in stirring in stagnant waters. Her pain and disappointment dropped like

a cold, dead thing into the silent depths of her heart, and lay hidden there.

The winter seemed colder than ever that year, and poor, paralytic Tom suffered sorely for want of the flannels she had been unable to procure him. Young Tom, too, hung over the small fire in an uncomfortable, suffering way, and the mother's heart, despite its indignation, was not proof against his pain. Of course, she did her best, mending and patching and darning for them all; but threadbare clothing, however tidy, is powerless against the incisiveness of a black frost. And Gordon helped her a good deal with his deft, quick fingers; but, as young Tom assured him contemptuously, fiddling over woman's work is not earning money. Like other ne'er-do-weels, Tom was very impatient of uselessness in any but himself.

"Gordon saves money, if he does not earn it," Mrs. Rayne said always in answer, "and what would father do without him?"

"Oh, father!"

Tom had his own opinion of the merit in father's claims.

But these claims relaxed their weak hold a month or two later. In the cold dawn of a spring morning the angel of Death passed by the poor rooms the Raynes inhabited, and the invalid's sleep merged into that which knows no awaking.

A pauper funeral, that was all they could give poor Tom; but tears as bitter as were ever shed for rank or worth, fell by the grave. All the selfishness of his young manhood, all the tyrannies of his middle age, were forgotten now. There are natures from which a little tardy gentleness effaces completely all recollection of half a lifetime of wrong. As she saw the clay fall on his coffin, Tom Rayne's widow remembered and mourned him as he had been in the early days when she had believed in him.

As to Gordon, he could recall nothing of Tom but kindness—little services undertaken on his behalf; little games suggested by him, in which there lay unending treasures of quiet enjoyment. And then those wonderful stories of Tom's, how could Gordon ever forget them—stories of far-off lands, rich in clever people, rich in friendship, rich in gold?

"When I'm a man," Gordon thought—drawing in a deep breath at the words—"when I'm a man——!"

It was strange how they all missed Tom; and yet not strange either, since it is always those who have demanded most of us who

leave the greatest blank in our lives. His presence in the poor little room; his querulous voice, reminding them of his needs and the hundred trifling sacrifices that his condition rendered imperative. These were all ended now. Tom, junior, could have the best seat by the fire, and Gordon could go to school again; and Mrs. Rayne no longer needed to stint her meals lest the invalid should hunger for some more tempting morsel.

"Gordon should be put to work now," Tom—called young Tom still from force of habit—ventured, about a week after his father's funeral.

"He must go back to school; he has never had a chance at school," Mrs. Rayne answered evasively.

"Neither had I," young Tom said sulkily.

"And you have not come to much," was on the mother's lips to answer, but she repressed it. There was no good in fanning the smouldering embers of discord. Whatever young Tom might be, he was her son, and she believed, wisely or unwisely, that she was bound to bear with him. And then she had a kind of lingering hope that her influence and example would move him one day. "Surely he, a big, bulky, brawny man, could not let his mother, already on the declining side of life, toil and labour for him always, without some dawning sense of shame."

It was not in Mrs. Rayne's nature to think the very worst of anyone, and when she began to tell herself that Tom missed his father, she found in his sorrow some faint gleam of promise.

Tom was certainly more morose than he had been; more exacting towards her; more tyrannous towards Gordon; and the connexion between sorrow for the dead and unkindness towards the living is not very close; but even that a mother can see when she looks for it.

"I don't think it is any good waiting to hear from Mr. Studd," she said one day timidly, when the summer had come round again. "I really think Tom you had better look out for some other kind of work."

"A fellow gets so little for working," Tom answered, with a shrug of the shoulders.

"Yes; but as you grow more skilled you would be better paid, and besides I am not able to support you," she added fretfully.

"Of course not, seeing how much the

little shaver costs you; but, I suppose, that don't matter when you've a fancy for him. Why don't you put him to work, he could earn a lot of money with his wheedling ways?"

"I should like to put him into good service—that was all the plan I had for him long ago; but lately I've been thinking that he might teach in the Board School—he's so sharp. It is nice work, they say, and well paid; and—" But she stopped suddenly, frightened by the scowl on her son's face.

"You would make a gentleman of that beggar's brat, while any kind of work is good enough for me," he said savagely.

"I have tried to do the best I was able for you too," the poor woman answered despondently.

That night, for the first time, Gordon felt the weight of Tom's fist. Hitherto, some lingering sense of honour had restrained him from lifting his hand against a creature so defenceless and harmless; but he had always been jealous of Gordon, in the pampered days when he had been paid for, as well as in later times when Tom had found him useless and in the way.

In any moral descent, the first step is always the most difficult. Tom's first assault on the child was a sudden blow given in haste. Later, Gordon became the safety-valve for all Tom's ill-humours. Not that the child always took his punishments patiently; his sense of justice revolted against attacks which were as unprovoked as they were cowardly; but his resistance only whetted the edge of Tom's tyranny. To give pain to a passive thing is poor pleasure; to torture anything that writhes and resists is a beautiful pastime to men like young Tom Rayne. And the beauty of it was that Gordon never complained; never dared to do so, lest he should wound mother. And Tom found delight of the richest kind in forcing Gordon to be polite to him in her presence.

"You great hulking tyrant; if mother knew how you treat me you would not dare to do it," the boy had panted once with flaming eyes.

"Mother! She's none of your mother," Tom had answered, jeeringly. "You're just a beggar's brat that she fancied to keep out of the workhouse."

"That is a lie, and you know it is," Gordon said, trembling.

"Oh, is it? Then you had better ask her."

But this Gordon did not dare to do, possibly from dread of having the statement verified.

At this period Gordon absolutely loathed Tom with the loathing that feels like murder. To know him so selfish, so base, so cruel, and then to have to tolerate him, to obey him, even to sleep with him!

And only a few little months ago father had been alive, and the world was beautiful and full of love. In his grief, rendered more bitter by hatred, the child kept away from home all he could, spending the mornings at the Board School, and often passing the rest of the day hungrily hanging about the streets till he knew the mother's day's work would be over and she at home again. And then he dared not confess that he had had no food all the day, lest it should grieve her.

"I wonder would she be very sorry if I ran away for good?" he asked himself sometimes desperately. "If I am not her own child it must be hard for her to keep me; and if I went away I could grow rich and come back to take care of her when she is old."

Like wiser people Gordon justified his idea and found it reasonable, once it had taken hold of him.

And those long empty afternoons fostered his craving for adventure and far lands. He had found his way to London Bridge, and used to stand leaning over its low parapet, and watching the heavily laden steamers threading their way noisily up and down the river.

"Where are these vessels going?" Gordon would ask himself, with a beating heart.

People noticed Gordon's eager, little, sharp face often; those of his own rank of life spoke to him sometimes; and an old man, lame of one foot, who sold oranges near the bridge, became quite friendly with him. To him Gordon confided, after a time, his interest in those busy crowded steamers, and was told that they were only river boats taking excursionists to Gravesend or Greenwich, and that the sea-going vessels sailed from a place called the Docks.

"There are the East India Docks, that is where the Australian ships starts from," the old man said in a reflective, mumbling voice. "I know, 'cos I saw my Jim aboard when 'e went out to the gold-fields."

"The gold fields," Gordon echoed, his heart giving a great throb, and the colour mounting into his eager little face.

"Ay, and 'e might 'ave grown rich, for he was doin' well, sent me money reglar, an' gold in the rough that a might see what it looked like; but 'e took fever an' died, Jim did. Eb, but 'twas a pity," muttering to himself in a pensive, senile way.

"I should like to see a vessel bound for Australia," Gordon said, his heart fluttering in her breast.

So the old orange-vendor told him the way to the Docks, and saw him off, threading his course rapidly through the crowds of vehicles and pedestrians, as only a little London boy can. Then the old man sighed, and shook his head without exactly knowing why.

Policemen were keeping guard at the Saint Katharine Docks, and these Gordon passed respectfully, with all a City Arab's dread of "the beaks," and hurried on with vision keenly on the alert.

Opposite the office of the Board of Trade, he had noticed a little crowd of merchant sailors waiting to be hired. He knew what they were, and had a kind of idea that their talk would be of the sea and ships, and so crept near them to listen. But they saw him and chased him, swearing at him a little, though more as a matter of habit than of ill-nature.

By-and-by he was at the East India Docks, and a great monster, large as a palace, larger than anything he had ever dreamed of, was lying lazily at anchor, while cargo was being swung by great cranes into the hold, and people were leisurely crossing the gangway.

"Here, youngster, take this aboard."

It was a man, encumbered by several parcels, who had spoken; and Gordon startled, stood with parted lips staring up into his face.

"Are you deaf? Take hold here," and, as in a dream, Gordon crossed the gangway and stood on deck.

"Now then, that is all right, you may clear off now, and here is sixpence for your trouble."

"Do you soon sail?" Gordon asked timidly.

"In half an hour."

"And you are going to Australia?"

"To Melbourne straight. Would you like to go?"

"Wouldn't I just."

"Then come along. Hide yourself away somewhere; the ship is big enough."

"If it was not for mother," the child answered, with a cry in his voice; and

then, covering his ears with his hands, as though to shut out the tempter, he sped back to shore, and, running as if for dear life, hid himself in the heart of the City. The passion of travel was in all his veins now, and the breath of the sea was on his lips thenceforwards, even in his dreams.

Once a week a Melbourne-bound vessel sailed away from the East India Dock; and once a week Gordon was always there, gliding furtively past the Cerberus who kept the gate, and feeling all his heart go out from him when the vessel lifted anchor. His very soul craved for the gorgeous and impossible beauty of the land to which she sailed.

"If it was not for mother," he said to himself always; and that name was a talisman which kept him faithful to what he thought his duty.

Home was growing more unlovely daily; but mother was there sometimes, and wished him there always, and that was enough.

And then one day suddenly Mrs. Rayne told him what she thought good tidings. One of her patrons had bought a country house; and she, with other charwomen, were to prepare it for the reception of the family.

"My fare will be paid there and back; and I shall be put on board wages. But best of all, I shall see green fields again," she said.

"And you will take me with you," he said, clutching her feverishly, while his eyes grew large and solemn.

"I could not, dear son, you would be of no use," she answered regretfully.

"Oh yes, I would; you know how smart I am, and I am not lazy; you would be sure to find me useful."

But Mrs. Rayne sorrowfully persisted in her refusal: his fare would be expensive, and she would have to pay it, and his work was not such as would be required at Appleholme. "But I shall come back as soon as ever I can," she added, "and meantime, you will be a good boy."

And poor little Gordon, who had no one to advise him, no one with whom he could discuss all his difficulties, answered, from the depths of his sorrowful heart: "How can I tell at times what is being good?"

And Mrs. Rayne, not understanding, kissed him, and told him he was always good.

He went with her to the railway station and saw her get her ticket, and accompanied her to the gate that separated intending travellers from their friends. "I'll be back in a week," she said, stooping to kiss him, "and if not I shall send for you."

He looked up at her with dim, swollen eyes, and his face grew sharp and weird as he answered, "You are leaving me, mother. I don't think I should ever have been able to leave you."

It was hours after before he reached home, and the short autumn evening had closed in, and a dense fog had risen and was creeping noiselessly through the streets.

Tom had brought in a friend or two for the evening, and Gordon had been much needed to run on an errand to the beershop, perhaps also to supply the funds for the necessary refreshment, for Tom had a shrewd idea that his mother had not left Gordon penniless.

In his absence Tom had been obliged to fetch the beer himself, and in a very minute quantity, contrary to all codes of dignity and hospitality. But the guests, in their turn, had stood treat; so that, before Gordon appeared, Tom was quarrelsomely tipsy.

When the child's white face looked in at the door, he rose with an oath, and strode towards him.

"See if I don't teach you to mend your idle, loafing ways!" he said.

But before the outstretched hand had time to seize him, the boy turned with a sob and ran into the mist.

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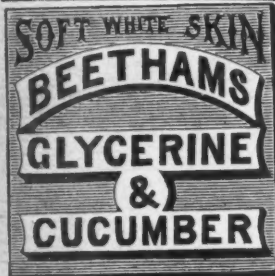
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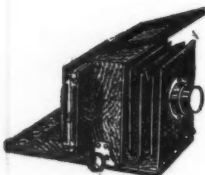
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